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This report discusses the educational opportunities for disadvantaged students in Connecticut. A brief comparison is made between the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I for Connecticut school districts and an Act which provides state aid for disadvantaged students. Statistical information about the state budget for compensatory education is presented, and project activities at all grade levels are briefly reviewed. (LB)

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Foreword

The genesis of this booklet can be traced to Dr. Bertram D. Sarason, editor of the *Teacher Education Quarterly*. Last summer, he asked Dr. Richards to prepare an article titled "Anti-Poverty and Education" for publication in the fall issue of that journal. At that time, the State Department of Education had just embarked on the task of implementing Public Act 523, "An Act Concerning State Aid for Disadvantaged Children"; and of planning for Title I of Public Law 89-10, "The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965."

We are now approaching the end of the first year of administering these historic education laws. At this point, it is appropriate to review the purposes and provisions of the acts and to survey the activities brought about by these laws.

This booklet is neither an exhaustive summary nor a definitive report of accomplishments. Such endeavors will be reported at a later date. Instead, the attempt here is to describe some of the issues, philosophy, and efforts involved in the education of disadvantaged children.

Dr. Richards is responsible for the ideas and opinions expressed, but I believe that his views are shared by other educators at the State Department of Education and by the members of the State Board of Education.

This publication is directed to a varied audience, including legislators, school board members, school officials, and interested citizens. It is hoped that each reader will gain a further insight into this crucial educational effort and a renewed commitment to the unfinished business which lies ahead.

Harold J. Mahoney, *Director*

Division of Instructional Services

May 1966

"The problems of the culturally disadvantaged are varied and complex, and it follows that solutions to such problems are also varied and complex. It is obvious that no one program is going to be able to adequately remedy the situation. What has been done and what is now being done are merely the first steps along a road that stretches far into the future. To start with, any program is going to cost money. This is not to say that money in itself will solve the problem. It must be spent wisely. Studies and evaluations of the programs now in effect need to be made so that their positive aspects may be incorporated in new programs. There must be a coordination of federal, state, and local programs that deal with the various aspects of the problem."

—Jack Snyder in *Journal of Secondary Education*

ANTI-POVERTY AND EDUCATION

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Part I

"If your plan is for one year, plant rice.
For ten years, plant trees;
For a hundred years, educate men."
—Confucius

In the sweep of American social history, the period of 1964-1965 may well stand as a significant land mark. For the first time the nation is making a truly concerted and substantial effort to resolve some troublesome paradoxes. We are the wealthiest nation on earth and yet many of our citizens live impoverished lives. In almost every population center, affluence and poverty exist side by side. America has been admired around the world as the "land of opportunity"; yet a sizeable number of her citizens face bleak futures because of race and color. Similar disparities have characterized education. Convinced that responsibility for education must be exercised at the local level, we have accepted excellent and deplorable schools within the same state — sometimes within the same community. Against our sincere commitment to universal education must be placed the facts that 20 million Americans have not completed 8 years of school and that the school drop-out rate in some areas is as high as 50%.

These contradictions have existed for some time, but never before has there been a keener awareness and concern on the part of national leaders and rank-and-file citizens. Recent events and enactments at both federal and state levels indicate that certain emerging convictions have become public policy. At the risk of oversimplification, these convictions might be stated as follows:

(1) Our American economy and democracy have really no place for the untrained and irresponsible individual. Either he must become productive on his own or society must contain *and* maintain him.

(2) Our nation cannot attain the corporate "good life," with its economic, cultural, and intellectual components, while a substantial number of citizens are deprived of the individual "good life" because of economic, cultural and/or racial disadvantages.

(3) The responsibility for achieving the goals of our society is a joint local-state-federal responsibility. Limitations which a local situation may impose upon individuals must be offset by support from the broader community.

The impact on education of the new public policy is illustrated by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (P. L. 89-10) passed

by Congress and by An Act Concerning State Aid For Disadvantaged Children (P. A. 523) passed by the 1965 Connecticut General Assembly. As suggested by the quoted epigram, a key element in current planning for long-term national well-being is conceived as the removing of barriers experienced by the disadvantaged to securing the benefits of education. A summary comparison of P. A. 523 (the State Act) and P. L. 89-10 (the Federal Act) is given below.

BRIEF COMPARISON OF P. A. 523 AND P. L. 89-10, Title I

P. A. 523	*P. L. 89-10, Title I*
Source Connecticut General Assembly	*Source* Congress of United States
Enactment Date June 9, 1965	*Enactment Date* April 11, 1965
Purpose To assist towns in extending educational opportunities to children who are socially, economically, or environmentally disadvantaged.	*Purpose* To provide financial assistance to local educational agencies for the education of children of low-income families.
Grade Level of Pupils Pre-school through Grade 12	*Grade Level of Pupils* Pre-school through Grade 12
Total Funds Available To Connecticut $10,000,000. for biennium	*Total Funds Available To Connecticut* $7,196,503.56 for fiscal 1966
Basis of Entitlement To Local School District Proportional to number of families with income less than $4,000 and the number of children on ADC.	*Basis of Entitlement To Local School District* Proportional to number of children from families with incomes less than $2,00 and children on ADC.
Minimum Number For Local School District To Qualify No Minimum	*Minimum Number For Local School District To Qualify* 100 or 3% of such children within school district but not less than 10

P. A. 523	*P. L. 89-10, Title I*
Provision For Non-Public School Children	*Provision For Non-Public School Children*
No	Yes
Expenditures Not Allowable	*Expenditures Not Allowable*
Rental of space, construction of new facilities, food, clothing, and other direct aid	Payment to private school personnel, and for private school equipment or facilities
Systematic Evaluation Required	*Systematic Evaluation Required*
Yes	Yes
Agency Charged With Approval Of Project Plans	*Agency Charged With Approval Of Project Plans*
State Department of Education	State Department of Education

Rather than discuss the provisions of these historic acts, details now familiar to most readers, the purpose of this article is to present some less familiar aspects of putting the laws into practice.

The "culturally disadvantaged" and their prospects

Crucial in educators' response to the task ahead is their conception of the "culturally disadvantaged child" and society's expectations of him. We must be at the same time realistic and idealistic. When we speak of the culturally disadvantaged child, we are referring to the child who is living in a home and/or community environment which does not encourage usual middle-class values, e.g., the importance of education, respect for community authority, postponement of present satisfactions for ultimate gains, appreciation of standards in art, music, theater, etc. Usually this is a child whose horizons are rather limited and whose self-respect and ambitions may be lacking.

None of this description is intended to demean the individual or his way of life. Yet some writers, in objecting to the term "culturally disadvantaged," go on to affirm the relative merits of the deprived sub-culture. After all, they say, its members have standards valid for themselves and have developed complex skills for coping with their environment. They ask, "What justification do middle-class observers have in expecting everyone to adopt their outlook and behavior patterns?" This point of view does appeal to tolerance and rightfully calls to task a more-righteous-than-thou attitude.

However, the question — who is to say whose culture is better? — obscures two critical considerations. First, in general our society, rightly or wrongly, rewards middle-class behavior and achievement. Consequently, the disadvantaged child, without considerable stimulation, is more likely than not destined to a life of low status and economic hardship. As

a second consequence, the nation may be deprived of latent abilities and human resources which are not given an opportunity to develop. These are the harsh facts and to gloss over them is to do no one a service. In a very real sense, the educational acts referred to are dedicated not to ameliorating present existence but rather to creating a new existence.

Barriers to Educational Benefits

The inescapable goal is upgrading the total way of life of disadvantaged individuals. But no one can deny that the barriers in the sphere of education alone are formidable. These barriers experienced by the educationally deprived can be identified as (1) money, (2) deficiencies in academic skills, (3) poor motivation and attitude toward school, and (4) traditional school programs. Both P. L. 89-10 and P. A. 523 put at the disposal of teachers and administrators throughout Connecticut the potential to overcome each of these barriers. Thus, it is incumbent upon the state's educators to know what this potential is and to determine how it can be properly applied. Let us consider each barrier separately and the prospects and problems associated with it.

Attack on the Barriers

A high concentration of low-income families within a school district seriously reduces that district's capacity to finance adequate education. P. L. 89-10 provides to Connecticut about 7 million dollars for fiscal 1966 and P. A. 523 provides about 10 million dollars for the biennium to be allocated to school districts proportional to their low-income constituents. Each district's dollar entitlement is to be used solely for educational programs specifically designed to overcome the disabilities of educationally deprived children from pre-school through high school. In this sense, the funds provided constitute categorical not general aid. Grants for projects are made by the State Department of Education when two conditions are met: (1) assurance is given that funds will be used solely for the purposes of the project and will not reduce local support, and (2) the project proposal has been approved by the State Department of Education.

Two additional points regarding finances should be stated — one relating to non-public school participation and the other relating to administrative costs. Under the terms of P. L. 89-10, provision within a project for non-public school pupils must be made if their disadvantaged circumstances qualify them. In all such cases, the program must be initiated and conducted by the public educational agency and, contrary to some reports, the provision of personnel, facilities, materials, and equipment is subject to explicit regulations. Secondly, in view of the controversy over administrative vs. operational costs in anti-poverty programs, maximum state-level administrative budgets are set within each educational law: in P. L. 89-10 an annual amount equal to 1% of the state's entitlement and in P. A. 523 an amount equal to ½% of the biennial appropriation. In its approval of project budgets, the State Department of Education is equally vigilant about the proportion of funds allocated to administrative functions.

Although disadvantaged children may have the same academic deficiciencies as some more fortunate pupils, the causes of the deficiencies are often quite different. In addition, children from deprived circumstances usually exhibit disabilities peculiar to their experience. Before teachers and administrators can develop appropriate projects, therefore, they must analyze and understand the educational needs of their particular pupil population. For example, it may not be enough to propose a remedial reading program for disadvantaged children. What is needed is a clear identification of fundamental language problems, verbal limitations, and experiential restrictions, not to mention attitudinal sets, which taken together may require a complete redefinition of remedial reading. Similarly, a tutorial program may best be conceived initially as a holding operation until the confidence and attention of potential truants is won. Imagination, as well as understanding, is needed in large quantities in the design of educational activities which will really kindle the spark. In some cases, it is almost out and, in many cases, overlain with smothering forces.

In short, successful education for the disadvantaged challenges the teaching profession to break step with tradition. New expectations are required if predominantly middle-class teachers are to have any impact on working-class values and sub-cultural attitudes. New instructional methods and organizational approaches must be tried; new curricula developed. The school must reach out into the community seeking to enlist family cooperation and to utilize cultural and social resources. Unfortunately, the traditional school program and atmosphere have often been a major barrier to the disadvantaged pupil. The frustration, sense of failure, and decrease in self-esteem engendered have compounded his inclination to disability. Which brings us back to a final paradox — the education which society intended for his benefit has placed him at a further disadvantage. This paradox the public school can and must deal directly with. We cannot afford to fail at the task.

"The task of changing the schools of the U.S. from a selective system which rewards and finally graduates only the more able students to one which develops each individual to his fullest capabilities is a difficult one. This task was started with the development of free public education through the secondary level and the compulsory school-attendance laws. That the schools of the U.S. now do give opportunity for all is, with some exceptions, generally true. The inequalities in the opportunities for education are well established. However, what is now required is not equality of *access* to education. What is needed to solve our current as well as future crises in education is a system of compensatory education which can prevent or overcome earlier deficiencies in the development of each individual. Essentially, what this involves is the writing and filling of educational prescriptions for groups of children which will enable them to realize their fullest development. Compensatory education as we understand it is not the reduction of all education to a least common denominator. It is a type of education which should help socially disadvantaged students without reducing the quality of education for those who are progressing satisfactorily under existing educational conditions."

—Benjamin S. Bloom, Allison Davis, Robert Hess,
Compensatory Education for Cultural Deprivation

PART II

"Open your schools to the promise of these
new programs. I hope that not a single day
will be lost. For in education, the time
we waste today can mean a life wasted tomorrow."

—Lyndon B. Johnson

In Part I, the writer presented some of the challenges facing our profession in the education of disadvantaged children. These challenges prompted the enactment of P.A. 523 (Connecticut's Act For Aid To Disadvantaged Children) and Public Law 89-10 (Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act). Under the provisions of these historic laws, Connecticut is eligible for over $12,000,000 during the current year to fund programs of intervention for pupils from pre-school to high school age. The need is great—how have the school districts across the state responded? This article is an answer, albeit incomplete, to the question.

First, let us look at some statistics. The table below presents a summary as of *May 2, 1966.*

P.A. 523	Title I, P.L. 89-10
Number of Towns Participating	Number of Towns Participating
97	107
Number of Projects	Number of Projects
132*	156*

*This number exceeds number of towns since some towns have more than one Project.

Total Grants	Total Grants
$5,737,204.	$6,108,068.
Number of Pupils Served	Number of Pupils Served
Approx. 75,000	Approx. 50,000

In sheer numbers, it can be seen that Connecticut is responding well to President Johnson's plea of urgency. However, numbers alone do not convey the effects on disadvantaged pupils. The significant impact depends upon the nature and quality of programs being provided. A comprehensive report on the more than 200 projects underway is beyond the scope of this article. However, some notion of the efforts being made can be gleaned from the brief review to follow. The projects mentioned were included because they reflect the variety in level, purpose, and emphasis found in the total picture. Also the projects herein reviewed were selected because they seem to be well planned and to include promising approaches.

A Review of Project Activities

In this brief review projects are grouped by school level and examples of large, middle-size, and small towns are included.

Pre-School

Several large cities have begun pre-school programs for disadvantaged children. In some cases, programs are jointly funded by O.E.O. and the state and federal education acts. Some were begun as Headstart programs; others were not. One city, using $250,000. of its entitlement, has set out to serve approximately 325 three- and four-year-olds living in areas of greatest deprivation. Some twelve classrooms operated on dual sessions were needed. In some areas existing school facilities were available. In others, rental of church and community space was required. In addition to usual pre-school activities, special field trips are taken, medical and psychological examinations are provided, and social work services are directed at family education.

Another large city likewise is providing a pre-school component within its total project. Having identified six target areas of greatest need, the goal of establishing 25 pre-school groups was set. Again the locations include school, church, and other community facilities. In all, 7 new centers were to be established and fully equipped. A distinctive element of the program is the employment of aides drawn from the neighborhoods served, thus bridging the gap between family and school.

Smaller towns have also established pre-school programs. For example, a town with a total elementary school enrollment of 2,500 has started an after-school project (afternoons and Saturdays) which reaches down to age 4. With a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:5, pre-reading, art and musical experiences, and field trips are provided to the younger children. Another small town with a sizeable number of non-English speaking children is offering a special pre-school program for them. Enrolled with other children who need preparation for school, the Puerto Rican children are exposed to English through peer and teacher contact and through enrichment activities, such as field trips, music, and drama. It is hoped that the usually high failure rate of such children in 1st and 2nd grades due to the language handicap can be reduced.

Grades 1 Through 6

Numerically speaking, more projects are operating at the elementary grade level than at any other. Also, the most common type of project at this level is remedial instruction in the basic skills, i.e., reading, other language arts, and arithmetic. Typical of such projects is one operating in a central Connecticut town of 6,000 population. About 75 disadvantaged children who are having reading difficulties are working in small groups twice a week with a remedial reading teacher. In addition to the skill training, an effort is being made to build the child's self-confidence and to kindle his desire to learn.

Other projects attempt to broaden the emphasis beyond reading to include whatever special learning needs disadvantaged pupils have. For

example, a project in a middle-sized industrial town groups children according to their needs and offers tutorial instruction. Individually or in small groups the pupils meet with their tutorial teachers for a period during the school day, in some cases four or five days a week. In addition regularly scheduled field trips are conducted and each teacher makes periodic visits to his pupils' homes. The special teachers meet each week to discuss common problems and to develop curriculum materials.

The introduction of new materials and instructional methods is the key element of another project focussing on academic development. Directed at deficiencies in language arts and in experiential foundation, this project involves a rearrangement of the language arts curriculum into sequential skills rather than grade levels. In addition, to compensate for limited conceptual background various manipulative devices and concrete materials are used. Thus, in an ungraded situation pupils are enabled to deal with skills and materials at their particular levels of readiness.

An even broader effort is underway in a certain Connecticut River town. Its project reaches beyond revision of a segment of the curriculum to the restructuring of an entire elementary school. Included as major changes in staffing, curriculum, and facilities are the following: reduction of class-size and the use of teacher aides; revision of the total reading curriculum; significant introduction of audio-visual and programmed instruction materials; institution of a spring school camp; the establishment of parent workshops; and remodeling and renovation of instructional facilities. In addition to improved in-service training opportunities for the school's staff, it is planned that this school will serve as a model for the total town, serving as a training center for all elementary teachers.

Lest it be assured that elementary school programs are exclusively concerned with academic goals, one more project should be mentioned. As the proposal states, "The town of . . . has no parks or museums and its public library is small and inadequate; consequently, there are no cultural places for the disadvantaged to go." Elsewhere, the term "cultural starvation" is used. As a part of its project, this town is introducing disadvantaged pupils to great music and literature through an improved record library, establishing instruction in instrumental music, and conducting trips to museums, libraries, theaters, and other cultural centers in nearby cities.

Junior and Senior High School

Most reasonably, the task of overcoming the educational deficiencies of disadvantaged pupils must be undertaken in the early school years. This explains the numerical dominance of pre-school and elementary grade projects. Nevertheless, the preventative goal should not obviate the pressing needs of disadvantaged adolescents. Many communities fortunately have recognized an equal responsibility to junior and senior high students and a number of projects are underway at these levels.

Again remediation in academic skills is a common project activity. One town is approaching this objective by establishing ungraded groups

for junior high pupils. Working with individuals or small groups, the teacher provides individualized instruction in reading, math, and English. The teacher is also expected to counsel with his pupils and to work with parents on school and home problems. Likewise, a much smaller town is providing tutorial assistance to junior high pupils either individually or in small groups. The goal is improvement in basic skills which, in turn, may improve attitude toward school through better success in regular classroom work.

Another school system has combined tutorial services with a range of other activities in a project entitled "The Expanded School." Adding to the resources of one school, the day is extended beyond dismissal time and the program beyond formal instruction. In addition to tutorial aid for junior high grades, music instruction, arts and crafts activities, a record room, gymnastics and modern dance, other interest clubs, and library study facilities are provided. The school also serves as the center around which field trips, recreational interests, and informal counseling can be organized. Enlisting both teachers and neighborhood leaders, the attempt is to build a close person-to-person relationship between pupils and staff, setting a ratio of 1:4. Thus, by providing continuing educational activities, the goal is to expand the present influence of the school in the lives of youth and the community.

At the Senior High level, a somewhat different set of problems and needs exists. To be sure, more personalized instruction can assist students who have deficiencies in academic skills. An example is a community which has instituted a high school tutorial program in which some 100 students will work with tutors at least two hours each week. Another industrial suburb is developing a 4-pronged approach at the senior high level. Those 9th grade pupils who have academic deficiencies will be provided with special remedial programs in reading and math. Supporting the instruction, counselors, school psychologists, and social workers will function as a team, advising on student needs and placement. As the student progresses in grade level, he will be enrolled in a Vocational Planning Course and be offered the opportunity to participate in an expanded Work-Study program. This would seem to be a realistic and necessary project for this area where the drop-out rate is high and the college attendance rate is moderate.

But what of the residential suburb and its predominately college-oriented high school? By and large, the relatively few disadvantaged pupils there have been ignored. A ray of hope is found in a project underway in one of Connecticut's most affluent communities. Recognizing the plight of disadvantaged students faced with an inappropriate curriculum, a new flexibility of program and schedule is being introduced. Special instruction is provided by team teaching and remedial specialists. Part of the school day is devoted to academic subject matter, while part is devoted to cultural experiences, practical skills, and recreational activities. Throughout, the emphasis is on building personal motivation, overcoming negative attitudes toward school, and planning realistically for further vocational objectives. This program may not erase the disparity between the disadvantaged and the upper-middle class college

preps but it may result in increased self-respect and purposeful learning for a previously neglected group.

Some Observations

No doubt, the preceding review has suggested several generalizations to the reader. At the risk of stating the obvious, the following observations might be made:

1. The majority of projects are directed toward basic academic skills primarily at the elementary level. However, it should be noted that a number of projects are concerned with other important objectives, such as improvement in attitudes, appreciation, and motivation. In such projects, approaches other than remedial and tutorial instruction are being employed.

2. While it is true that urban centers have the largest dollar entitlement, programs for disadvantaged pupils are not exclusively a "big city" effort. As a matter of fact, projects are underway in every section of the state with the largest number of projects located in towns ranging from 2,500 to 25,000 in population.

3. Two approaches have been taken by smaller towns to fund programs adequately. Several have pooled their entitlements and developed joint projects which serve the combined populations. In other cases, a single town has combined its entitlements under both P.A. 523 and Title I in order to provide sufficient funding for its own project.

4. A significant characteristic of many projects might be called "community outreach". In one way or another, the school is reaching beyond its walls to utilize community resources, to influence the home, and to create a better understanding of itself. Thus, field trips are taken and resource people come into the school; parents are involved through social work services; under school auspices after-hour social and recreational programs are offered; and aides are recruited who are indigenous to the neighborhood. Obviously, the problems of the disadvantaged cannot be overcome by one agency working in isolation.

Evaluation of Results

An appropriate closing question — how well are these projects achieving their purpose? Results must be considered from a pluralistic viewpoint, considering the range of valid objectives. At the time of writing, no definitive answer can be given to this crucial question. Evaluation of outcomes would be premature at this point since no project has yet been in operation for a full school year. (One may even wonder whether one year provides adequate time to achieve the impact required).

These comments are not intended to minimize the importance of sound evaluation. The legislation itself rightly insures that educators on local and state levels seriously appraise the programs established for disadvantaged children and youth. To this end, each school system having projects underway will be required to submit an evaluation report for each project at the close of this school year. Instructions and report format have gone out to all superintendents of schools in Connecticut. In essence, the report asks for an evaluation of each project objective and information about the evaluative techniques used. Based on the data secured, the project director or other school official is asked to identify the most successful and least successful activities carried on. In addition, data regarding pupil drop-out, retention, and promotion will be reviewed.

Since all projects are approved on a one-year basis, a review of evaluation results will be a part of the reapproval process undertaken by the State Department of Education. Growing out of the evaluation review, the Office of Program Development plans to disseminate across the state descriptions of promising project activities, suggestions for evaluative procedures, and ideas for further project development.